

## A NEW VARIETY OF *SENECIO AUREUS* L.<sup>1</sup>

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About two years ago Mr. W. W. Ashe submitted to the writer for determination specimens of a plant which he had found in the mountainous region of western Virginia and eastern Tennessee. The plant in question is similar in habit and in all essential morphological characters to *Senecio aureus* L., a relatively common and well-known species of northeastern United States and adjacent Canada, but differs in having the lower surface of the leaves, especially those of the offshoots, densely white-tomentose in the early stages and only slightly glabrate in age. Furthermore, the leaves in the specimens from Mr. Ashe are somewhat thicker and firmer in texture and tend more strongly to an oblong-ovate outline than in typical *Senecio aureus* L. So far as known, this new variety has been found only in the valleys of the Middle and South Forks of the Holston River in western Virginia and eastern Tennessee, where it has been observed and collected by Mr. Ashe at a half dozen or more stations.

The origin of the plant is not known. It may be a mutant or, on the other hand, it may be a hybrid. There are some indications that it may be a hybrid between *Senecio aureus* L. and *Senecio tomentosus* Michx. The former of these two species occurs in the valley of the South Fork of the Holston River, and the latter species is relatively common in eastern Virginia. While the habit of the new plant is like *Senecio aureus*, yet the prevailing outline of the leaves of the offshoots and those of the lower parts of the upright stem, as well as their texture and tomentose character, suggests *Senecio tomentosus*.

The plant under consideration can scarcely be regarded as worthy of specific rank; and for the present, pending experimental evidence, it is deemed advisable to designate it as a new variety. Attention was called to this interesting case of variation at the meeting of the Botanical Society of America in Nashville in 1927, with the hope that additional material might be secured and its

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geographical range established, but no further information has been obtained. The writer takes pleasure in naming this rather remarkable variety for Mr. W. W. Ashe, who has made many important contributions to the knowledge of our flora. A description and record of distribution may be given, as follows:

*Senecio aureus* L. var. *Ashei* Greenman, n. var. Plate 35.

Caulis erectus 5-12 dm. altus; foliis inferioribus longe petiolatis, oblongo-ovatis, 3-10 cm. longis, 2-7 cm. latis, crenato-serratis juventate utrinque albo-floccoso-tomentosis supra denique plus minusve glabris.—VIRGINIA: moist meadows, near Marion, Smyth County, May 26, 1927, *Ashe*, TYPE; near Atkins, Smyth County, May 27, 1926, *Ashe*; moist meadows, limestone valley soil, near Lodi, Washington County, May 26, 1926, *Ashe*. TENNESSEE: moist meadows, near Johnson City, Washington County, May 24, 1926, *Ashe*.

The type specimen is in the private herbarium of Mr. W. W. Ashe, Washington, D. C. A portion of the type and photographs are in the Missouri Botanical Garden Herbarium.

#### EXPLANATION OF PLATE

##### PLATE 35

*Senecio aureus* L. var. *Ashei* Greenman, n. var.

From the type specimen in the herbarium of Mr. W. W. Ashe.